

**CALIFORNIA LEGACY PROJECT
 2002 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

1. Improving Data for Conservation Planning

- **Updated Public Land Ownership Map:** Building on work that the CALFED program started, the Legacy Project has updated data from major state and federal land managing agencies for the statewide coverage of public land ownership and some private conservation lands. New data are being added as Legacy contacts private nonprofit organizations and public agencies for ownership update information. Moreover, the Legacy Project is working with GIS staff from state and federal agencies to develop a long-term maintenance system for public land ownership data. By spring of 2003 the updated map will be current to July 2002.
- **California Wetlands Inventory:** Per requirements of AB 2286 (Davis. Wetlands), the Legacy Project helped convene state, federal, and NGO wetland scientists and managers to reach agreement on a science-based approach for completing a statewide wetlands inventory and data layer. The wetlands group achieved consensus on a consistent, statewide wetlands classification system that builds upon the National Wetlands Inventory system and is flexible enough to accommodate regional and local restoration needs at the project level. In addition, the new inventory will recognize the soils and hydrology of wetlands in a way not now accounted for. The Legacy Project has partnered with the California Department of Fish and Game, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, EPA Region IX, the Riparian Habitat Joint Venture, and the California Coastal Conservancy on this effort. Additional partners are likely to join in the near future. Nearly \$900,000 has been raised towards the cost of completing the inventory to date, with additional contributions of in kind services by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. By incorporating local and regional mapping, digitizing hard copy maps, and analyzing parts of the state never mapped before, a new wetlands land cover map to be used for conservation planning – not regulatory delineation purposes - will be completed in two and a half years. This accelerates the National Wetlands Inventory complete cycle for California from the current estimate of 40 years.
- **Improved Urban Growth Distribution Model:** The Legacy Project contracted with Professor John Landis and his team at UC Berkeley to improve forecasts of where urban growth might occur within and outside of existing major metropolitan areas over time. These data will help to identify the kinds of habitats and commodity production landscapes at risk from conversion over time, and help us to understand the impacts of conservation investments on growth patterns. The 2020 and 2050 projections, will be available on the California Digital Conservation Atlas.
- **Updated Statewide Vegetation Map:** Under contract to the Legacy Project, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) included recent Colorado and Mojave Desert vegetation data into their statewide vegetation data coverage. These data come from the Mojave Desert Ecosystem Initiative project led by the Department of Defense. Central Valley data were also updated when the Bureau of Reclamation completed their vegetation mapping for the region this summer. CDF is also in the process of integrating the Bureau of Land Management vegetation data from their North and East Colorado planning effort into their statewide map.
- **Standardized Classification System for Statewide Vegetation Mapping.** An interagency group, facilitated by Legacy staff, has developed draft standards for statewide mapping and classification of land cover (vegetation). The group has also identified core information that needs to be described for each map unit (polygon, cell). A formal agency review is being performed before these standards can be finalized. Eight state and federal agencies and the University of California are involved in this effort.
- **Existing and Emerging Conservation Planning Efforts Map.** A data set compiling existing and emerging conservation planning efforts has gotten off to a good start. The Project has been actively surveying local governments (including county planning departments, parks and

recreation departments, and open-space districts) for information about ongoing conservation plans. Information about conservation plans are also collected at each Spotlight on Conservation Regional Workshop. By the end of the workshop series in 2003, there will be an inventory of planning efforts with information on planning areas, priorities within the plans, status, and contact information all in a GIS data base.

- **Local Data Survey.** Initiated an inventory of selected regional and county GIS data bases to evaluate the availability and quality of information that could be useful in furthering the objectives of the Legacy Project in conserving land and aquatic resources in the State. The Legacy Project hopes to augment its existing Statewide data sets with finer-scaled, more localized data sets available from established GIS sources in counties, special districts and cities; and make the information available to future users. The results of the survey will be interred into the CERES metadata catalog.

2. Improving Access to Data and Planning-support Tools

- **Inventory of Internet Mapping Sites:** Legacy has completed an inventory of other Internet mapping sites in use or being designed in Resources Agency departments and some Cal/EPA departments. Legacy Project staff have worked with GIS Managers in these departments to review the draft design of the Conservation Atlas and discuss compatibility.
- **California Digital Conservation Atlas:** The Legacy Project has completed development of the first phase of the California Digital Conservation Atlas, a web- based mapping tool that provides access to datasets related to working landscape and natural resource conservation. Users of the Conservation Atlas will be able to view over 45 data sets, create custom maps, and download some information to their own computers. You don't have to be a GIS expert to access the system and manipulate the data layers. The Conservation Atlas will be released to the public by the end of the year.
- **Partnership with Cal/EPA:** The Legacy Project has initiated a partnership with the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), the research arm of Cal/EPA, to use their Environmental Protection Indicators for California (EPIC) and the Ecotox Data Base to develop some statewide or regional maps of ecological stressors to add to the Conservation Atlas and assist in integrating a variety of datasets generated by Cal/EPA Boards, Departments, and Offices into condition and stressor indicators for resource health.

3. Launched Private Land Stewardship Initiative: With a kickoff in the January 2002 Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting, and hiring of a consultant in June, the Legacy Project launched its Private Lands Stewardship efforts in earnest in 2002. Focused on outreach, strategy development, and inter-departmental collaboration, the Initiative is focused on improving the state's role in maintaining farms, forests, and rangelands; and increasing the availability of tools to improve stewardship on private working lands.

- To date, those efforts have included: stakeholder outreach, inter-departmental and interagency information sharing on conservation programs, analysis and interagency coordination on Farm Bill implementation, and input on various Legacy Project products, including workshops and reports.

4. Assessing the Health and Condition of Resources

- **Improved Interagency Coordination:** An interagency monitoring and assessment workgroup has been convened to explore common interests in assessing the health and condition of resources in California. Efforts to identify regional data to support key indicators for resource health and conditions have begun. Identification of management objectives driving monitoring and assessment programs has also begun. These efforts constitute the first steps in implementing a series of statewide resource health and condition assessments designed to identify and evaluate investment options.

- **Final Resource Health and Condition Assessment Methodology.** The Final Resource Health and Condition Assessment Methodology report introduces key concepts that are important for any assessment program to produce meaningful results for informing management decisions. These concepts are woven into a series of major steps that constitute the Legacy Project methodology itself. The report concludes with recognizing several key implementation issues involved in such an ambitious statewide approach.
- **Assessing the Health and Condition of California's Lands and Natural Resources, 2002 Assessment:** This report represents an example of how the Legacy Project's methodology can be applied by using indicators of condition, stressors, and management responses for conserving biodiversity and working landscapes and evaluating the outcomes. It is also designed to stimulate discussions among agencies about important goals, indicators, and data improvements. The final document incorporating reviewer comments will be complete by December 2002 and available on the web.

5. Engaging with Regional and Local Interests:

- **Results From Four Spotlight on Conservation Workshops In:** In partnership with UC Davis Extension, the Legacy Project held four bio-regional Spotlight on Conservation Workshops to identify local and regional conservation priorities, existing efforts, and important conservation criteria and implementation strategies. Workshops were held in San Luis Obispo, San Diego, Los Angeles, and Oakland. Over 320 people participated in these workshops, including city and county officials, state and federal agency staff, academics, farmers, ranchers, and representatives from land trusts, military bases, timber companies, environmental nonprofit organizations, and businesses. The results of these workshops and additional outreach will be an important basis for communicating regional conservation issues to state decision makers. Workshop products such as maps compiling local/regional conservation planning efforts and priority areas for investment will also facilitate planning and implementation efforts among regional stakeholders. In the first half of 2003 the workshop series will be completed with five additional workshops to be held in Victorville, Fresno, Redding, Eureka and Auburn.

California Legacy Project A Sample of 2003 Activities

Improving Data for Conservation Planning

- Begin an inventory of state and federal conservation easements and add data to public lands ownership map
- Update public ownership and private conservation lands map
- Develop a "How-to-Guide" and user-friendly methodology for annual updates of the public ownership database
- Update database on existing and emerging conservation plans
- Finalize coordinated, statewide vegetation classification and mapping standards
- Develop statewide wetlands map based on agreed-upon classification system
- Begin to incorporate riparian habitats into the statewide wetland inventory
- Complete survey of relevant datasets developed by counties and regional councils of government
- Develop and refine data layers for aquatic biodiversity and urban open space

Improving Access to Data and Planning-support Tools

- Enhance and expand the performance of the web-based Conservation Atlas
- Customize planning support tools to departmental needs

Private Stewardship Initiative

- Continue to coordinate and improve private stewardship funding capacity and outreach to private landowners
- Develop a private working lands stewardship strategy

Assessing the Health and Condition of Resources

- Continue to implement the lands and natural resources health and condition assessment methodology
- Produce the next Assessment with more in depth analyses and new sections on urban open space, and aquatic biodiversity

Engaging with Regional and Local Interests and Facilitating Partnership Opportunities:

- Hold remaining five "Spotlight on Conservation" workshops and analyze feedback
- Facilitate additional interdepartmental and interagency communication

Other Products

- 2003 Conservation Priorities Report, based on workshop results, health and condition assessments and additional analyses.
- Inventory regulatory programs and evaluate how these programs affect conservation acquisition and stewardship priorities in a Regulatory Framework Report